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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

December 13, 1991

Donna R. Searcy, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 222  
Washington, DC 20554

92-289

RE: PETITION FOR RULE MAKING  
RM-7869

Dear Ms. Searcy:

Please find enclosed one original and five copies of my comments on the above captioned matter. Sufficient copies are enclosed to ensure each commissioner receives a copy.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Gilmore, WB6RHQ  
15040-A Reedley St.  
Moorpark, CA 93021

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of: >  
Amendment of Part 97 of the >  
Commission's Rules Governing >  
Amateur Radio Services > RM-7869  
Regarding Repeater and >  
Auxiliary Operation in the >  
1.25 Meter Band >

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To: The Commission

PETITION AGAINST RULE MAKING BRANCH  
FCC MAIL BRANCH

I, Mark Gilmore, WB6RHH, hereby submit my request to the Federal Communications Commission to not take action on this Petition for Rule Making, as submitted by the American Radio Relay League. It is my belief that the petition is premature and ill conceived.

I have been active on the 1.3 meter amateur band in Southern California since 1977. Since that time, I have seen band activity go from almost non-existent to saturated. The saturation was present in Southern California well before the reassignment of the bottom 40% of the band. Also, as a member of the 220 Mhz Spectrum Management Frequency Coordination Board, I have been kept well aware of the specific activity and modes of communication existing in the 1.25 meter Amateur band. As a 1.25 Meter band user, I utilize repeaters, FM simplex, weak signal and limited experimental modes. The overwhelming majority of 1.25 meter band usage is FM, with less than 1% weak signal operation.

I would like to state that I am violently opposed to the passage of RM-7869. It is my belief that the issues brought up by the ARRL and the its conclusions are not valid here in Southern California and the remainder of the United States. Further, it is my belief that different geographical areas should create bandplans that favor local option as outlined by the ARRL in the "ARRL Repeater Directory". I also believe that the decision to reserve specific segments, within the 1.25 meter band, should be left to the mutual consent by the members representing the various modes of operation within the Amateur organizations responsible for 1.25 meter spectrum coordination.

I would now like to comment point-by-point, referencing the Petition for Rule Making, RM-7869, presented to the FCC by the ARRL:

1. Without question, Southern California has the greatest 1.25 meter band usage. The comment about displacing "many hundreds of existing stations" is not accurate in Southern California. I would guess there is less than 50 active weak signal users in Southern California. By comparison of activity in most VHF and UHF bands, Southern California is the measure of usage in the remainder of the US. The fact is, outside of California, band usage is far less, so I can't agree with the ARRL's inflated numbers.

2. Commenter Tynan's assertions are not accurate. Traditional weak signal modes are not necessary to observe Sporadic E propagation. Sporadic E is hardly a mysterious mode. Several Amateur publications have documented Sporadic E propagation. Sporadic E has been discussed at great lengths in a multitude of engineering papers and textbooks. Further, due to other propagation modes, it is not uncommon to communicate several hundreds of miles with FM simplex here on the West coast.

3. The assertion that because other bands have reserved spectrum, the 1.25 meter band must follow suit is inaccurate. We have a true "apple and oranges" comparison here. None of the other bands referenced have been recently decreased 40% in size. None of the other bands referenced were already saturated with users prior to the decision to reserve segments within the respective bands.

4. The ARRL petition seeks to restore the spectrum originally allocated to weak signal users, but what about other users of the spectrum that have been displaced? The ARRL makes no mention of the multitude of auxiliary links and control channels that have no spectrum allocations in Southern California whatsoever. Personally, I had 10 auxiliary links in place in the 1.25 meter band. I have been forced to move those links to other bands at great personal expense. Since the moves, the favorable propagation I came to enjoy on 1.25 meters is non-existent on higher Amateur bands. Some of my systems no longer function or have been severely degraded.

5. It is true that I do not like to see any valid communications mode excluded or suppressed in any Amateur band, but I would like to question the validity of the need for Sporadic E experimentation exclusively in the 1.25 meter band. Sporadic E behaves much the same in the 6 and 2 meter band. In fact it occurs much more often. It has no unique properties in the 1.25 meter band. Sporadic E studies at VHF frequencies can be conducted on other Amateur bands as well.

6. It is no more equitable for repeaters to go off the air in favor of weak signal interests or for weak signal interests to go off the air in favor of repeaters. The simple fact is that 17 repeaters exist in Southern California in the segment requested by the ARRL for weak signal protection. Those repeaters were assigned that frequency first. It would seem to me that the

spectrum coordinators of each geographical area should set up forums for open discussion of compromises that must be made to accommodate all interests on the 1.25 meter band. Due to band saturation disparities in different parts of the country, unique solutions must be found by the respective coordination councils, offering compromises, that all those involved can appreciate.

7. "Creation of a small weak signal band" is in fact consistent with past Commission activities, but we have a unique situation here that requires unique solutions. Again, no other similar Amateur band was recently reduced by 40%. Should 2 meters have been reduced by 40%, unique solutions would have to be found for those weak signal users and repeaters to co-exist.


The WARC quotes are not applicable here since amateur satellite service will never be available on the 1.25 meter band because most other countries have not reserved 1.25 meters as an Amateur band. Amateur satellite use certainly does not speak for the unique need of the weak signal users of the 1.25 meter Amateur band.

8. I can't believe that those repeater owners who have already been displaced from the previous 220.50 to 222.00 segment of the band are any different that the repeater owners that would be displaced by the loss of existing available repeater spectrum. The only difference here, is an opportunity to share the allotted spectrum amongst the Amateurs presently using the band. Previously, it would not have been possible for the Amateurs and the land mobile/government users to share the old 220-222 Mhz segment. In this light, it is my belief that compromises by the actual users of the 1.25 meter band must be formulated and agreed upon. Most of the ARRL directors who are responsible for this petition are not 1.25 meter band users and are not qualified to make decisions for the bands usership. This petition may be what the ARRL thinks is arbitrarily equitable, but it does not reflect the needs of the actual users.

9. I believe that it is premature to request such regulation from the Commission. The actual users should be allowed to discuss their unique needs based on geographical areas of the US. Should these discussions take place and equitable resolutions not take place, perhaps the Commission can be of service.

In light of the above mentioned point-by-point comments, I respectfully request the Commission abandon proposed assignment of weak signal operation exclusively to 222.000 to 222.150 segment of the 1.25 meter Amateur band. I ask that the matter be referred back to the ARRL, so that resolution can be found by local area coordination councils.

Respectfully Submitted,  
December 13, 1991

  
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